

National Search and Rescue Plan

Civil Search and Rescue
Putting the U.S. Pieces Together

Dan Lemon
United States Coast Guard
Office of Search and Rescue

In this presentation, we will provide an overview of the National Search and Rescue Plan. We will look at how the Plan provides for military support of civil SAR, nationally and internationally. We will also highlight aspects of the Plan particularly relevant Combatant Commands.

Civil SAR is a topic that stirs mixed feelings among military personnel. Some would prefer that DOD not be involved in civil SAR at all. Some commands welcome the international doors that civil SAR can open. Personnel who have been directly involved in lifesaving tend support the military involvement, and are likely to see relevance of civil SAR experience to other military responsibilities.

The agency I work for, the Coast Guard, handles about 40,000 SAR cases annually, typically saving over 4,000 lives. So we have a lot of experience in recovering persons in distress.

I trust that this presentation will help you take a fresh look at the subject of civil SAR.

Executive Overview

 **General objectives**

 **Responsibilities**

 **Planning considerations**

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The focus of the National SAR Plan is lifesaving, a priority for any culture claiming to place a high value on human life

The existence of a cost-effective national and global SAR system serves civilian and military citizens regardless of where they travel.

A national SAR system not only meets humanitarian needs, but is required to satisfy U.S. treaty obligations, and is useful for diplomatic purposes too.

The U.S. Coast Guard is the lead federal agency for civil SAR, but DOD has certain primary and support roles as well, which we'll discuss later.

I understand that civil SAR is considered to be part of personnel recovery, which falls under the DOD policy purview and oversight of the Dep Assist Sec of Def for Prisoners of WAR/Missing Personnel Affairs (DPMO).

Civil SAR has implications for capability assessment, planning, readiness, training, and budgeting.

**The NSP, developed with Joint Staff assistance,
contains much of the national doctrinal basis for
providing successful civil SAR services.**

“At the heart of war lies doctrine. It represents the central *beliefs...to achieve victory...It is the building material for strategy. It is fundamental to sound judgment.*”

General Curtis E. LeMay, USAF

“Doctrine provides...a common *philosophy, a common language, a common purpose, and a unity of effort.*”

General George H. Decker, USA

“The key...is simple; *centralized planning and decentralized execution...The basic requirement...is preplanned response in accordance with commonly understood doctrine.*”

Vice Admiral Henry C. Mustin III, USN

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Please take a moment to read this slide.


Like doctrine, the SAR Plan addresses our beliefs, strategies, and philosophies.

It provides for standard terminology, purpose, and cooperation.

And it is a centralized plan that supports decentralized, pre-planned responses to assist persons in distress.

NSP Big Picture

 **Purpose:** Coordinate civil SAR to meet domestic needs and international commitments, and make effective use of all available resources to support civil SAR

 **Scope:** Includes aeronautical, maritime and land SAR, but does not include air ambulance, salvage, military operations, disaster response, etc.

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This slide touches on the overall purpose and scope of the National SAR Plan.

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The term “use of all available resources” is a key concept within the international civil SAR community. No country can afford enough dedicated SAR resources to provide effective SAR services over entire SAR regions. Therefore, it is essential that ships at sea, volunteers and other resources be used. Almost all nations, including the U.S., must arrange for use of military resources for civil SAR if they have such resources.

At the federal level, care must be taken to avoid ambiguity regarding which plans apply to which types of operations. This is particularly true with regard to the National SAR Plan, and the Federal Response Plan which applies to disaster response. A whole different set of rules may be involved, depending upon which plan applies.

Basic Principles

Principles discussed in the NSP

Examples:

- *Not-to-interfere with military missions
- Use international standards
- U.S. system is part of global SAR plans
- Focus is on recognized RCCs
- *Military-civilian cooperation emphasized
- No charging for SAR

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About half of the SAR Plan is devoted to summarizing basic principles upon which our national SAR system is based.

Availability of these written principles is valuable to military personnel from Command to operations levels. Even when decisions must be made quickly or with inadequate SAR training, understanding these basic principles will often ensure that the right actions are taken.

These are a few of the principles discussed in the SAR Plan.

I must emphasize the first one, which is a long-standing principle with particular relevance to you. The military carries out civil SAR operations on a non-to-interfere basis with military missions.

I would also like to comment on the issue of military-civilian cooperation. This seems to be a matter of substantial concern in many countries. I'd like to share with you some excerpts from an article printed last week's Washington Post.

From Washington Post article by Bradley Graham on Oct 18, 1999...

...a major new study warns that mounting distrust in civil-military relations is undermining a long history of cooperation and threatening military effectiveness. Concern about the distancing of the military from the rest of society has reached the top levels of the Pentagon, with Defense Secretary William S. Cohen launching a campaign this year to "reconnect" America to the military and boost public understanding of the armed forces.

"Our research identified numerous schisms and trends that have undermined civil-military cooperation and, in certain circumstances, could degrade military effectiveness," the report said. While civilian and military groups continue to express a degree of mutual respect, the study found these expressions "rest on an underlying alienation that may in time erode the surface support each claims for the other."

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Implementing Guidance

International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue Manual (IAMSAR)

- Volume 1 - Civil SAR management
- Volume 2 - Rescue coordination centers (RCCs)
- Volume 3 - Mobile facilities

National SAR Supplement (NSS)

Agency Addenda to the NSS (optional)

Other directives, instructions, Joint Pubs, etc.

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The SAR Plan adopts two publications which, together, replace our old National SAR Manual, which in the past has been published by the Joint Staff as Joint Pub 3-50.

The first is the three-volume IAMSAR Manual, collectively about 800 pages of information tailored to SAR managers, rescue coordination centers, or to SAR operations carried out by aircraft, ships or boats. The second is the National SAR Supplement to the IAMSAR Manual, which covers SAR information and guidance unique to the United States.

IAMSAR is available now in the official languages of the UN. It is expected to be the model for the NATO SAR Manual, and is intended to ensure that the whole world uses compatible SAR terminology and procedures.

Historically, the Coast Guard has been the only agency publishing its agency-specific SAR information in an Addenda.

The Joint Staff has begun work on a new Joint Pub for Civil SAR, and I understand that a DOD Directive on civil SAR pends signature by Secretary Cohen.

The Federal SAR Alliance

Operating agencies

- Department of Transportation
- Department of Defense
- Department of Interior

Support agencies

- Department of Commerce
- National Aeronautics and Space Administration
- Federal Communications Commission

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These are the federal agencies that are signatory to the National SAR Plan.

The heads of each of these agencies signed the updated SAR Plan this year.

Secretary Cohen signed the Plan on March 3, 1999.

Operational Responsibilities

-  **Ocean areas - USCG**
-  **Continental U.S. - USAF**
-  **Alaska - U.S. PACOM**
-  **National Parks - NPS**
-  **Overseas - “It all depends...”**

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This is the basic breakdown of responsibilities as discussed in the Plan, basically the same as they have been in the past.

The National SAR Supplement, which elaborates on operational roles of these federal agencies, will include a fold-out chart depicting the geographic areas for which the U.S. is responsible, i.e., the U.S. SAR regions.

The roles of the Combatant Commands overseas will vary, depending on factors such as:

- Command capabilities and resources;
- Responsibilities and capabilities of other nations in the AOR; and
- Opportunities to support or train other nations, especially if they request such assistance.

Under international law, we are always obligated to assist persons in distress, regardless of their location, nationality or circumstances.

Why a Federal SAR Alliance?

📄 *“Military victories are not gained by a single arm...but are achieved through the efforts of all arms...welded into...[a] team.”*

General of the Army George C. Marshall

📄 *“In modern warfare, any single system is easy to overcome; combinations of systems...make for an effective fighting force.”*

Vice Admiral Stanley R. Arthur

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This slide illustrates that the basis for SAR cooperation within the federal community is comparable to the basis for joint military operations, or for international military alliances...same rationale.

SAR Regions

Purpose

How established

Aeronautical/Maritime harmonization

By definition: One SRR--One RCC

Where documented:

- ICAO Regional Air Navigation Plans
- IMO SAR Plan

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Under sponsorship of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO), both UN agencies, the globe has been divided up into a patchwork of internationally-recognized SAR regions, each with one associated rescue coordination center.

The lines separating SAR regions (we try to avoid sensitive terms like “SAR boundaries”) must be formally agreed by neighboring nations. There are about 20 SAR regions adjacent to U.S. SAR regions, more or less, depending on whether they are aeronautical SAR regions or maritime SAR regions. Most countries have one SAR region. The U.S. has too many--we have 12.

Aeronautical and maritime regions are not aligned with each other in many parts of the world, but ICAO and IMO are working with the countries concerned to harmonize them where practicable.

Aeronautical regions are documented in ICAO Regional Air navigation Plans, and maritime regions are described in the IMO SAR Plan. As mentioned before, the U.S. SAR regions will also be depicted in a chart in the National SAR Supplement when it is published.

SAR Agreements

Some reasons to have agreements:

- Build commitments to support SAR
- Help integrate U.S./global SAR systems
- Resolve procedural and sensitive matters
- Delimit SAR regions








Must be coordinated with the Coast Guard and State Department

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This slide shows some reasons for establishing SAR agreements, especially on the international level.

The National SAR Plan requires that international agreements be coordinated with the Coast Guard and State Department. Combatant commands would coordinate such efforts through the Joint Staff. DPMO is responsible to oversee DOD's involvement in civil SAR agreements.

SAR Agreement Risks

-  **Conflict with international law**
-  **Conflict with NSP or other U.S. policy**
-  **Circumvent official SAR authorities**
-  **Create systems parallel to the real ones**
-  **Leave out important provisions**
-  **Politicize SAR excessively**
-  **Introduce wrong terms and procedures**

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As this slide shows, not only are there benefits to establishing SAR agreements, but there are also risks.

Well-intentioned and properly-motivated SAR agreement initiatives often fall into one or more of these traps.

Problems often develop when DOD becomes involved in civil SAR agreements. This is because military operational and legal personnel in most countries, including the U.S., usually have not had the chance to become competent on all the relevant laws, policies, standards, national and international plans, terminology, procedures, other agreements, and SAR authorities that governments have officially designated.

The Coast Guard is responsible to stay proficient in these areas, and to coordinate development of U.S. SAR services as an integral part of the global SAR system.

National SAR Committee

- Member agencies = NSP signatories
- Coordinates NSP implementation
- Develops National SAR Supplement
- Oversees interagency & international matters
- DPMO represents DoD



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The National SAR Committee (NSARC) is sponsored by the Coast Guard, and consists of the same federal agencies that are signatory to the National SAR Plan. NSARC is responsible for implementation of the Plan.

The Dep Assist Sec of Def for Prisoners of WAR/Missing Personnel Affairs represents DOD on this Committee, and has established a SAR working group within DOD for internal coordination of NSARC matters.

Opportunities Enhanced by the NSP

-  **Makes use of all available resources:**
 - Saves more lives and property
 - Saves time and money
-  **Fosters synergy within personnel recovery mission**
-  **Improves international relations, civil & military**
-  **Reduces “competition” and gaps among SAR authorities**

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Here are some potential benefits to the United States and to DOD that derive from provisions of the NSP.

General Goals

-  **Single worldwide civil SAR system**
-  **Whole world coverage**
-  **Use all available resources**
-  **Humanitarian and operational rather than political and diplomatic focus**
-  **Everybody knows where alerts go**
-  **Comprehensive communications support**
-  **Exploit technologies**

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The next few slides are fairly self-explanatory, so I'll just give you a chance to read them. Here are some of the things we're trying to accomplish.








More Goals

- 📄 **Complete the maritime Global SAR Plan**
- 📄 **Harmonize aeronautical and maritime SAR**
 - SAR regions, procedures, equipment
- 📄 **Minimize the search function**
- 📄 **Do more with less**
- 📄 **Share functionality and resources**
- 📄 **Improve competence (information, training, tools, etc.)**

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And here are a few more goals.

Operational Considerations

-  **Reference material**
 - NSP, IAMSAR, NSS, DOD directives
-  **Communications**
-  **Training (managers, RCCs, & operators)**
-  **Search planning tools**
-  **Rescue equipment**
-  **Plans and exercises**
-  **Readiness posture**

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These are some of the issues that any authority involved in either civil or combat SAR need to consider.

Summary Highlights

- ☞ **Signed by SECDEF Cohen**
- ☞ **Effective January 1, 1999**
- ☞ **Provides for civil-military coordination**
- ☞ **Can benefit both civil and combat SAR**
- ☞ **Integrates U.S. and global SAR services**
- ☞ **Is basis for fast, cost-effective lifesaving**

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In conclusion, I'll just re-emphasize these points...